
Opening Remarks by Prof. Attila Menyhárd, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Eötvös Loránd University

Although Canada is a country that is part of another continent, almost 5,000 miles away from Hungary and across the Atlantic Ocean, it played an important role in modern Hungarian history that could hardly be overestimated. During the Great Depression and in 1956–1957, more than 60,000 Hungarian refugees fled Europe and settled in Canada, which provided generous help to Hungarian immigrants. Some of these people became successful entrepreneurs. Linamar, the second largest automobile parts manufacturer in Canada, and which has almost 30,000 employees worldwide, was founded by one of these Hungarian refugees, *Ferenc (Frank) Hasenfratz*, in 1966. This company bought *Mezőgép Rt.* in Orosháza, Hungary, in 1992 and recreated it as a dynamically growing enterprise that is the most important employer in the region.

Canada is known for having the most multicultural, most multilingual and the most tolerant society in the world. Perhaps it also is the most innovative one. Innovation is the key factor of development in society and in the economy, as in all aspects of life as well. Innovation is always a response to challenge. One of the most potent examples of the innovative mind is the history of Bombardier. The first registered patent of the founder of this company, *Joseph-Armand Bombardier*, was the B7 snowmobile, a vehicle for travelling over snow. This was the basis of establishing a small company in 1942, which expanded over the past decades into a multinational firm engaged in air and railway technology.

The snowmobile was a response to a challenge coming from the natural environment, while the legal system of Canada has responded to the challenges of social diversity and a multicultural society with refined, sophisticated and unique (innovative) solutions. As a mixed legal system, it provides a unique regime, uniting the benefits of common law and legislation. The law provides for social and multicultural diversity with freedom, which requires flexibility in structural issues, as well as when construing the content of norms. Canada shows a very good way of managing diversity, which should also be an example for all of the other legal systems of the world. The year 2017 was an anniversary for Canada and for the ELTE Law Faculty, too. Canada celebrated the 150th anniversary of its confederation and independence, while we celebrated the 350th anniversary of establishing our Faculty. This coincidence may be a good start for developing academic relationships. The social and economic interactions between our countries can be an inspiration for our work to build such relationships further.